

Message Text

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SUBJECT: PRESS REACTION TO HOLBROOKE SPEECH

1. "BUSINESS TIMES" JUNE 21 HAS FRONT PAGE REPORT AND EDITORIAL
ON SPEECH. SOTRY ALSO APPEARED "NEW NATION" INSIDE PAGE.

2. FULL TEXT OF EDITORIAL FOLLOWS:
" THE US HAS MADE SEVERAL ATTEMPTS TO EMPHASIZE ITS COMMIT-
MENT TO ASIA AND ITS AWARENESS OF THE MILITARY,
POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC ROLE THAT IT MUST CONTINUE TO PLAY
WITHIN THE REGION. FOR SOUTHEAST ASIA ITSELF, THE MONDALE
ATTEMPT REMAINED ONLY THAT, AND WAS SINGULARLY UNIMPRESSIVE.
BUT US POLICY EXPRESSED THROUGH VARIOUS HIGH-LEVEL OFFICIALS
WITHIN THE ASIAN REGION HAVE COME OFF A LITTLE BETTER. MR.
RICHARD HOLBROOKE, FOR EXAMPLE, OUTLINED THE ROLE OF THE US
WITHIN ASIA QUITE ELOQUENTLY WHEN HE SAID THAT THE US MAY
ALWAYS REMAIN A POWER WITHIN THE REGION, BUT THAT ITS POWER
MUST BE NEWLY DEFINED AND REDEFINED AS CIRCUMSTANCES
EVOLVE.

"US POWER IN THE NEW CONTEXT MUST BE FIRM LEADERSHIP
TEMPERED BY COOPERATION WITH OLD FRIENDS AND OLD
FOES. THE QUALITY OF THE LEADERSHIP MUST,
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HOWEVER, BE THE MODULATING LEADERSHIP OF A FRIEND
AMONG EQUALS. THERE CANNOT BE OVERTONES OF
AGGRESIVENESS OR EVER OVER-ASSERTIVENESS.
WHILE THE US WILL CONTINUE TO HAVE AN IMPORTANT
ROLE TO PLAY IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICIES
WITHIN THE REGION, THE DIRECTION OF THOSE POLICIES
WILL HAVE TO BE DECIDED WITH DUE REFERENCE TO THE

ASIAN COUNTRIES THEMSELVES.

"MR. HOLBROOKE'S OUTLINE OF US POLICY IN ASIA WAS HIGHLY COMPREHENSIVE, COVERING A CONTINUED US MILITARY PRESENCE, RELATIONS WITH JAPAN, NORMALISATION OF RELATIONS WITH CHINA, AND PROMOTION OF US TRADE AND INVESTMENT IN ASIA. AGAIN, THE US HAS BEEN CAREFUL TO EMPHASIZE, THROUGH VARIOUS CHANNELS, THAT ALTHOUGH IT HAS PLANNED GROUND TROOP WITHDRAWALS FROM KOREA, THE US IS BY NO MEANS GOING TO REDUCE ITS MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE REGION. IF IT INTENDS, AS MR. HOLBROOKE SUGGESTS, TO EXTEND, THROUGH THE PHILIPPINES, ITS VIGILANCE OVER SOUTHEAST ASIA, THEN THAT WILL OBVIOUSLY BE WELCOME REASSURANCE FOR THE COUNTRIES OF THIS REGION.

"MR. HOLBROOKE ALSO TACTFULLY CLOSED IN ON THE TAIWAN ISSUE, IN HIS COMMENTS ABOUT US RELATIONS WITH CHINA. ALTHOUGH THE US WANTS TO CONTINUE BUILDING UP ON ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH CHINA, IT WILL SEEK THE FRAMEWORK WHICH ALLOWS THE US TO TAKE FULL ACCOUNT OF ITS CONCERNS REGARDING TAIWAN, WHILE MOVING AHEAD STRATEGICALLY WITH CHINA.

"ON US TRADE AND INVESTMENT IN ASIA, MR. HOLBROOKE
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HAS AS MANY OPTIMISTIC THINGS TO SAY AS HE DID ON THE OTHER KEY ELEMENTS OF US POLICY IN ASIA. HE USES A RATHER MORE PERSUASIVE ARGUMENT THOUGH, THAN THE USUAL EXPENDED ON THIS TOPIC. INSTEAD OF PROMISING THAT US BUSINESSES WILL BE ENCOURAGED TO INVEST IN ASIA AND TRADE WITH ASIA ALL FOR THE SAKE OF ASIA, HE POINTS OUT INSTEAD THAT US BUSINESSMEN HAVE MUCH TO PROSPER FROM VENTURES INTO ASIA BOTH FOR INVESTMENT AND TRADE.

"IT MAY SOUND A LITTLE LIKE SAYING THE SAME THING IN TWO WAYS, BUT THERE IS AN IMPORTANT DIFFERENCE. THERE IS A SNEAKINESS IN TALKING ABOUT BENEFITS TO ASIA WHEN ONE HAS ONLY THE ENDS OF THE US IN MIND. MR. HOLBROOKE IS FAR MORE CONVINCING BY LAYING THE CARDS ON THE TABLE. HE HAS SAID ONLY THAT THE US WILL ENCOURAGE EXPORTS TO ASIA BECAUSE, AFTER ALL, TWO-WAY TRADE IS A FAIR AND HEALTHY EXCHANGE.

"POLICIES, HOWEVER PROMISING, ARE UNFORTUNATELY DESCRIPTIVE ONLY OF THE DIRECTION THAT A COUNTRY

WANTS TO TAKE, NOT OF WHAT IT CAN ACTUALLY ACHIEVE.
ALTHOUGH MR. HOLBROOKE'S DESCRIPTION OF US POLICY
IN ASIA IS FULL OF HOPE AND SOUND PROPOSALS, THEY
MEAN NOTHING IF THE US GOVERNMENT DOES NOT SUPPORT
ITS THEORETICAL OBJECTIVES WITH CONCRETE FOLLOW-UPS
IN THE REAL WORLD. VICE-PRESIDENT MONDALE'S UN-
REMARKABLE TRIP IS A PRIME EXAMPLE OF HOW A BADLY-
DESIGNED ATTEMPT TO ACHIEVE THEORETICAL OBJECTIVES
CAN BECOME DAMAGING. THE US HAS MADE SOME VALIANT
PROMISES TO ASIA. THERE IS NOW AN ONUS UPON THE
SUPERPOWER TO FULFIL THEM."
INGRAHAM

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